

## WEST CREWKERNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at Clapton & Wayford Village Hall

### **Members Present**

Mrs Julia Borland (Chairman)  
Mrs Caroline Broom  
Mr Frank Freeman  
Mr D Yeomans  
Mr R Franklin  
Mrs Sue Osborne (South Somerset District Councillor)  
Mr M Best (Somerset County Councillor)

### **Also present**

2 Members of the Public  
Miss Jackie Parsons (Parish Clerk)

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies received from Mr B Carter

### **2. Public Open Forum – Each member of the public present is entitled to speak once only, in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 5 minutes.**

As drivers approach the Hewish crossroads from Clapton towards Crewkerne the hedges are overgrown and are causing vehicles to drive more in the centre of the road. This restricted visibility is likely to cause an accident. This issue will be reported on the Highways website. There were many planning stipulations with this site one of which was for the hedges to be maintained in good order. Mr M Best stated he would follow up with the Planning Department at South Somerset District Council to see what enforcement action can be instigated.

A member of the public asked the Parish Council if there could be road signs installed indicating the turning to Woolminstone from both directions. This had been raised in the past, however lack of funds within Highways meant it unlikely that they would be installed.

The Clerk stated that she had received a letter from the Clapton and Wayford village hall committee thanking the West Crewkerne Parish Council for their grant towards the running costs of the Village Hall.

### **3. Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda (Pecuniary or non-statutory interests).**

None of the Parish Councillors declared any interest (Pecuniary or Non-Statutory interests) in items on the agenda

### **4. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

The minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> March meeting were already approved at the Annual Parish Council meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019. The Parish Clerk had made an error and the

minutes to be approved at this meeting were the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019. The Parish Clerk apologised for the error.

**5. Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.**

The adoption of the telephone box at Hewish, the Chairman had looked at the rules and regulations regarding the purchase of the telephone box and wanted to know who owned the land on which the telephone box stood. It was established that the telephone box at Hewish stood on a grass verge owned by Somerset Highways. The meeting decided to go ahead with the adoption of the telephone box for the community at Hewish and the Parish Council would pay the £1.00 for adopting the telephone box. After the 7 years for which B T cover the cost of electricity, the West Crewkerne Parish Council would pick up the bill for the electricity used. It was suggested that the Clerk send an e-mail to the resident of Hewish who proposed this adoption asking if she still wanted to go ahead with the adoption of the telephone box and also stating that she would undertake to keep the telephone box clean and tidy and any maintenance on the box had to conform to BT standards. Mr R Franklin (Parish Councillor) stated he is happy to put up some shelves for her in the telephone box if she would like. The Parish Councillors also felt it would have been nice if she had come along to a Parish Council meeting and explain in a little more detail what she proposed to do with the telephone box.

No other matters arising from the minutes.

**6 Planning Matters.**

West Crewkerne Parish Council is a Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications and as such does not make the final decision on any application. Any decisions and comments made by the Parish Council will be fed into the planning process and added to the report by the Planning Officer. South Somerset District Council is the Planning Authority and will issue the final decision notice (Planning Determination) once their investigations into the application, consultation period and decision making process has been completed.

A); 18/03836/FUL 14<sup>TH</sup> January 2019 Little Shabby Farm, Axe Road, Drimpton Crewkerne DT8 3RJ. Siting of twin unit mobile home for use as temporary agricultural worker's dwelling for a period of three years.

**Application permitted with conditions 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019.**

**Planning Department decision accepted by Councillors at the meeting.**

B); 19/00844/HOU 4<sup>TH</sup> April 2019 Lyminster Farm Hewish Gates West Crewkerne Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8QP. The erection of a single storey extension and replacement porch.

**Application permitted with conditions 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019.**

**Planning Department decision accepted by the Councillors at the meeting.**

C); 19/01466/PAMB 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 Barn, South of Council Houses Hewish Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8QX. Notification of prior approval for the change of use of agricultural building into 1 No. dwelling.

**Application withdrawn 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019.**

D); 19/01414/FUL 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019 Coombe Farm Roundham Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8RR. Proposed extension to an existing storage building.

**This application is still ongoing at the time of the Parish Council Meeting**

E); 19/01482/PAMB 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019 Farm Buildings Lyminster Woolminstone Crewkerne Somerset. Notification for prior approval for the change of use of agricultural building to a dwelling house.

F); 18/03873 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 Clapton Court Clapton Road West Crewkerne Crewkerne TA18 8PT. Alterations to dwelling including replacing a single building with new single storey garden room and conversion of part of an existing outbuilding into a games room and yoga studio.

**Application permitted with conditions 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019.**

**Planning Department decision accepted by the Councillors at the meeting.**

Mrs J Borland stated that the new website is not easy to navigate for planning applications. Mr D Yeomans stated that although he is able to navigate his way around the new website for planning applications, there is no longer a weekly list compiled of planning applications for each parish and you cannot look at a planning application retrospectively.

Mrs J Borland then went on to say that she had contacted Sue Osborne (South Somerset District Councillor) to ask what a PAMB application was and whether the Parish Council were supposed to comment on the application as no paperwork had been received. The reply from Sue Osborne was that PAMB is a legal document giving permitted development rights and does not usually come to Parish Councils. Mr D Yeomans suggested that as no paperwork has come to us and there is no further information on the website to enable us to make any comments then we ignore this planning application.

7. Highway Matters

Roundham Small Improvement Scheme.

Mr M Best (Somerset County Councillor) met with Mr Barrie Carter (Parish Councillor) to look at the traffic travelling through Roundham and the speeds being done by the motorists. However the meeting was abandoned due to road works taking place in Roundham which slowed the traffic down. The meeting has had to be rescheduled for some time in the future. Mr M Best has given Mr B Carter some more dates and when he meets Mr B Carter in Roundham he is going to borrow the speed guns from Crewkerne Town Council just to see some of the speeds that the cars are doing. Mr M Best has also spoken to the S.I.S. department in Somerset County Council who have not finalised the plans yet for Roundham. Mr D Yeomans (Parish Councillor) asked if anything came of the setting up of a speed watch group in Roundham. Mrs J Borland stated that Mr B Carter had said that they could not get enough people to volunteer and so were unable to proceed.

Gigaclear work along Axe Road Drimpton.

Mrs J Borland ask Mr R Franklin if he would like to indicate what is happening in Hewish with Gigaclear. Mr R Franklin stated that there was an on/off situation in the village it is currently off. They are currently cutting a track from Hewish cross roads down to the village but they have not finished the work in the village. It is total chaos and as taxpayers we are paying for this work. Mr R Franklin feels that somebody should be chasing this firm up to do the job properly. Mrs J Borland stated that she has had several complaints about the work because Hewish has become basically blocked off. Mrs J Borland then went on to say what had

happened with Axe Road in Drimpton, the road signs went up to say that the road was going to be closed for road works. By day 3 nothing had happened so Mrs J Borland phoned up to see what was happening and they denied that Axe Road existed and that they were doing any work in that area. Mrs J Borland telephoned Somerset Highways and they were not helpful although the road closed signs were removed the next day. Since then there have been further white markings with writing made on Axe Road but no sign of anybody coming to do anything to the actual road. Mrs J Borland stated that basically Gigaclear are causing a lot of problems in this area with road closures and only doing bits of the work. It would appear there are problems in other nearby parishes as well and the general consensus is that the work is fragmented and there is no communication between the different groups of contractors and there does not appear to be any leadership or project management of the project. Mrs J Borland asked the Clerk if she would send a letter of complaint to Gigaclear and if they want examples of work not completed then the village of Hewish and Axe Road in Drimpton are two prime examples.

Mr R Franklin then asked if he could bring up three other points on highways. Although not in our Parish the parking up Hermitage street impacts on the West Crewkerne Parish because of the number of HGV'S going up that road with cars parked there, there is nowhere to pass. Mr M Best (Somerset County Councillor and Crewkerne Town Councillor) stated that unfortunately is the nature of Hermitage street. Mr M Best also stated at the meeting that Hermitage street is going to be closed from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July for 12 days whilst Western Power replace power cables which is going to cause absolute chaos. The second point Mr R Franklin brought up was mobility scooters on the road going against the flow of traffic. Mr M Best replied to this point and stated that they had brought this point up with the police on a number of occasions and there are no traffic laws that cover mobility scooters. They do not have to have insurance or any training in the use of mobility scooters and the police are powerless to alter the situation, it is a grey area. The third point that Mr R Franklin wished to bring up is the bridge at Clapton. The bridge is only suitable for one vehicle at a time to go over it but drivers still try and negotiate it two abreast. Mr R Franklin asked if traffic lights could be erected, Mrs J Borland stated that they would not erect traffic lights and there is a road sign already stating priority for traffic on the bridge. Mr M Best stated that even if you had a sign put up for priority one way drivers would still try and get over the bridge before the next driver. Finger Post at Cathole Bridge Road Crossroads.

Mrs J Borland was pleased to report a positive outcome on the finger post at Cathole Bridge road. The finger post had been collected from Somerset Highways' yard in Yeovil and delivered to a local man in the West Crewkerne area who is going to repair the post at no cost to the West Crewkerne Parish Council or Somerset County Council and then position the post back to where it was knocked down. There had been some verbal and written exchanges behind the scenes which had resulted in the post being repaired.

8. Reports from Councillors, including District and County Councillors. No reports from Mrs C Broom or Mr F Freeman. Mr D Yeomans gave an update on the users who visited the Parish Council website from January 2019 to June 2019.

There were 57 new users and Page Views 253, there were 91 users in February and 75 users in March. Mr R Franklin had two points to bring up, the first was does the Parish Council have a budget and where is it. The Chairman stated that this was the precept shown in the accounts. The second point was have we applied for a grant for the laptop. The Clerk stated that she thought we were out of time to apply for a grant but she would check with SALC. Mr R Franklin also asked for a copy of the Standing orders. The Chairman replied to Mr R Franklin and stated that there was a new 49 page document which had been e-mailed out to everyone and it was under the heading of NALC. The clerk also offered Mr R Franklin the chance to review her cash book to see how the Parish Council monies were being spent if he so wished. Mrs J Borland had nothing further to report.

Mr M Best (Somerset County Councillor) stated that Crewkerne Town Council had a meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019 and one of the items on the agenda was the planning application for 169 houses on Lang Road in Crewkerne which impact on the traffic using Cathole Bridge Road. The developers have stated in their application that only 9% of the traffic from the new development will use Cathole Bridge Road. Somerset County Council originally objected stating that the figure was nearer to 57%. An independent consultant has stated that the figure is 30%. The County Council have now stated that they have no objection to the development but have concerns over the usage of Cathole Bridge Road by vehicles, but it would be for the local district council to have the final say on the application. Mr M Best stated that at the meeting of Crewkerne Town Council it was voted to reject the planning application on the two points that Somerset County Council had used in their original argument which centred on Cathole Bridge Road. Crewkerne Town Council have recommended that the planning application be rejected this now goes forward to Area West and if they recommend rejection of the application this will go to regulations committee. Mr M Best stated that if the application goes ahead it will be an absolute disaster for Cathole Bridge Road.

Mrs Sue Osborne (South Somerset District Councillor) stated that Somerset Highways at present are giving standing advice only on highway matters. The South Somerset District Council are looking to adopt a green environment strategy by the Autumn although the time frame is tight and may well be extended. The District Council have put aside £300,000 for this project. Somerset County Council looking to adopt a green environmental strategy as well.

The transformation programme has some shortfalls, the technology has not performed as it should have done and monies have been set aside for the next two years to remedy this situation as it is the front line staff, that are taking the brunt of the shortfall in the technology. There is also a shortage of planning officers in South Somerset District Council and this is a national problem as well. The District Council are looking to recruit more planning officers but may have to pay a market supplement to attract the planning officers to this rural area. Mr M Best stated that there is a backlog of planning applications and they are looking at ways of shifting the backlog. Mrs S Osborne also stated that she has expressed regret along with several other councillors that they no longer get the weekly planning lists from the planning department because from these lists they could pick up the Permitted Development applications which do not come to Parish Council. A Permitted Development application gives the owner the right to turn a building providing it is

not listed or liable to flooding into a dwelling. The rules on permitted development are very lax. Mrs Sue Osborne also stated that the extra money that is going to the transformation programme will require a monthly report to committee at South Somerset District Council together with details of where the money has been spent and performance figures so that the District Council can see that they are getting value for money,

Finally, Mrs S Osborne stated that there are public consultations on the local plan and she would urge Parish Councils to put their recommendations forward and also local residents to have their say on the plan because the District Council does not want to be doing this plan again in three years time at a cost of 1 million pounds. Mr R Franklin then referred back to the lack of weekly reports on planning applications and asked Mrs S Osborne why these could not be produced. Mrs S Osborne stated that Cilica provided the new computer system and that it was something to do with the computer programme. Mr R Franklin stated that surely Cilica should be held accountable as the system is not fulfilling the purpose for which it was purchased. Mr M Best stated that the executive committee at South Somerset District Council is looking into this matter and asking Cilica to make the computer system fit for purpose. Mr R Franklin asked that this matter be minuted so that it can be followed up in future Parish Council meetings. Mr D Yeomans asked the question that surely somebody should be held accountable within the District Council for the failure of the system to deliver? Mr M Best and Mrs S Osborne stated that the portfolio holder and the executive committee are looking into the contract with Cilica and looking at the warranties and penalties clauses with a view to pursuing them if the system is not brought in to be fit for purpose. Mrs S Osborne stated that if any member of the public felt strongly about a particular subject then the bi-monthly meetings of the District Council are open to the public and questions can be put forward to the portfolio holder at the meeting and they are obliged to stand and try to answer the questions. The next meeting of the District Council is to be held the following week.

9. Finance

A): To pay the Clerk's Salary of £210.65

Cheque No. 316

B): To pay HMRC £52.60

Cheque No. 315

10. Correspondence;

Various e-mails

The most frequent e-mails are the Avon and Somerset Police Commissioner's newsletter, Somerset Waste Partnership, Rural Funding, Somerset Local Plan the consultation day for this parish is 23<sup>rd</sup> July at Henhayes from 4pm to 7pm, flood prevention newsletter. There was an e-mail came out on environmental strategy which any comments had to be in by the 10<sup>th</sup> July. Mrs J Borland stated that there was not a lot that the Parish Council could comment on regarding this survey as a lot of points mentioned the Parish Council had no input into them. The Parish Council did try and keep on top of the Highways reporting any problems to Somerset

Highways. A member of the public did say that Clapton and Wayford village hall were looking to explore the possibility of solar panels on the roof of the village hall together with looking at grants to fund the project.

Broadwindsor's Neighbourhood Plan.

Mrs J Borland stated that she had read the above neighbourhood plan and it was a very good plan but there would be no way a small parish like West Crewkerne could produce such a plan. However, if Crewkerne Town Council were looking to undertake a Parish plan would it be possible for West Crewkerne Parish to be part of that Parish plan. Mr M Best stated that Crewkerne Town Council was considering undertaking a Parish plan because it is one of the best defences against future development and if there is a Parish Plan in place then the ward/parish gets 25% of the sale as opposed to 15% without a Parish Plan.

Road Sign Stickers

Mrs J Borland had looked at these stickers for Wheelie Bins. Mr R Franklin thought they would be too expensive and would only be of value where properties fronted a main road anywhere else they would be inconsequential. Mrs J Borland stated she was particularly thinking of Roundham.

As a Parish are we proposing to undertake any kind of celebration to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War?

Mrs J Borland put this item on the agenda so that people could go away and think about whether and what celebrations we can consider for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of the Second World War as a Parish Council. The village hall committee have not considered yet what they proposed to do.

Mr R Franklin stated that he had received a consultation document from Devon and Somerset Fire Brigade regarding the fire service. Mr D Yeomans stated that the consultation document did not affect Crewkerne which is why he had not put the document on the Parish website. Mr M Best said that most of the station closures were in Devon only one in Somerset and that the only stations affected near here were Yeovil, Martock and Chard. The fire service has suffered a 25% reduction in its budget from Central Government and they have an ageing fleet of fire engines, the cost of replacing them with the new smaller fire engines is upwards of £300000 and the money is not there, so they have to look elsewhere to find the monies.

11. To confirm that the next meeting of the West Crewkerne Parish Council will be Held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at Clapton & Wayford Village Hall at 7.00pm.

Mr M Best gave his apologies for the next meeting as he will be unable to attend.

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Chairman